Rise in prices of raw materials

3039. SHRI O. P. KOHLI:
SHRI S. AUSTIN:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rise in the prices of raw materials including petroleum based raw materials have put the consumers in a tight spot;

(b) if so, the details of the consumer itmes whose prices shot up in the last six months; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to control the rise in consumer prices?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) Any variation in the prices of raw materials including petroleum based raw materials generally affects the prices of final products.

(b) It is difficult to compile such a list.

(c) Government has accorded the highhst priority to control the prices of all essential commodities. Apart from certain long term measures taken by the Government to increase the production of goods which are in short supply, other measures taken by the Government include imports of such items thereby augementing the total availability of essential commodities. Some of these commodities are also being supplied through the Public Distribution System at below market prices. Stringent action is being taken against hoarders, blackmarketeers and those indulging in unfair trade practices under the Essential Commodities Act etc. by the State Governments/UTs.

Complaints received by BIS

3040. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of complaints received by Bureau of Indian Standards with regard to quality of products during 1993 and 1994;

(b) the details of the products against which complaints were received;

(c) the action taken by Government thereon.

(d) whether in spite of saving taken corrective steps, there has not been much improvement in the quality control by BIS; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken for meaningful control over the quality to safeguard the interests of the consumers?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) During the financial years 1993-94 and 1994-95 (upto 28.2.1995), 201 and 144 complaints respectively were received by the Bureau of Indian Standards regarding Quality of BIS certified products.

(b) The complaints were received regarding quality of BIS certified products like cement, mild steel tubes, PVC pipes, RCC pipes, electric iron, GLS Lamps, batteries, biscuits shaving blades and mattresses.

(c) Under the BIS Certification Marks Scheme, complaints which were found to be genuine are redressed either by way of replacement or repairs depending upon the products involved.

(d) and (e) Under the Certification Mark Scheme, BIS ensures strict quality control checks and effective monitoring

of the performance by the BIS licensees and whenever considered necessary, either suspends or cancels the licence. As a result, there has been a gradual decline in the receipt of complaints.

Sale of Imported sugar under PDS

3041. SHRI K. M. KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether sale of imported sugar to card holders of Delhi and other States has been made in 1994 and upto February, 1995 under PDS;

(b) if so, names of such States and Union Territories with selling rate per kilogram;

(c) whether sale of imported sugar was made in open market at rate of Rs. 13.50 per kilogram prior to its sale at Fair Price Shops;

(d) whether this sale did not become popular amongst the consumers;

(e) whether sale of imported sugar through Fair Price Shops was forcible;

(f) if so, reasons for importing huge stock of sugar;

(g) whether Government propose to take action in this regard; and

(h) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) and (b) The allocation of levy sugar from the month of September, 94 to March, 95 was a blend of imported sugar and indigenous sugar. Both indigenous sugar as well as imported sugar was distributed at a uniform retail price of Rs. 9.05 per kg. throughout the country though Public Distribution System is being

(c) The Indian Sugar & General Industry Export Import Corporation Ltd., had operated a scheme for sale of imported sugar in the open market through consumer outlets such as Kendriya Bhandar, Super Bazar and private shops in Delhi, Bombay, etc. on the condition that retail price would not exceed Rs. 14.50 per kg.

(d) & (e) No such specific complaint has been received from any State Government/UT Administration.

(f) Import of sugar had become necessary in 1994 due to the shortfall in domestic production of sugar.

(g) and (h) Do not arise.

Functioning of consumer courts

3042. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Consumer Courts in doldrums" as reported in "The Statesman" of 30th January, 1995;

(b) if so, whether Government have ever reviewed the functioning of the Consumer Courts;

(c) if so, the reasons for mounting cases in Consumer Courts; and

(d) what immediate steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission organised an All India Conference of Presidents and Members of the State Commissions on 24.1.1994 where the Statewise